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## A LOSS TO ART LITERATURE.

OUR Boston contemporary, The American Art Review, we hear, with sincere regret, will cease to appear after the October issue, which will complete its second year. The publishers, Messrs. Estes & Lauriat, and the editor, Mr. Köhler, in their labors to establish it on a permanent footing, have done genuine service to art in this country. When we say that their magazine has been conducted with scholarship and good taste, we only echo the opinion of all who are acquainted with it. One important thing it has certainly done. It has shown that we have some etchers in this country entitled to rank among the best of the day, and it may well be doubted whether, but for the liberal encouragement extended to these artists, such excellence as is shown in some of the plates of The American Art Review would have been called forth for years to come.

The fact that this is the second failure within a year of an American publisher to maintain an expensive art magazine would seem to indicate that we have not a large enough number of persons of taste and wealth to support such an enterprise. When, after several years' trial, Messrs. D. Appleton & Co. concluded that, with all the resources of a great publishing house, it would not pay them to continue the American edition of The Art Journal it called for no small degree of confidence for another house to embark in a still more costly enterprise of the kind. The projectors of The American Art Review seemed to think that the public was thirsting for American etchings; that the absence of these was the principal cause of the previous apathy in regard to American art publications; that if they could only give them American etchings of good quality and in sufficient quantity, little else was to be desired.

Doubtless the truth is that persons willing to pay a high price for an art magazine prefer to buy the French "L'Art," or the "Gazette des Beaux Arts," which are superior to any other art periodicals—at least so far as the etchings in them are concerned—and the etchings are the chief item of expense in an art journal which makes a feature of them. For a general art magazine at a low price, The Magazine of Art fills the popular want; and as a practical guide and instructor in art for students and amateurs, the undisputed success of THE ART AMATEUR would seem to show that this field is satisfactorily filled. Neither of these publications exceeds a third of the price of The American Art Review.

When it is further considered that the art subscription book business is pushed throughout the country, that the popular monthly magazines devote much attention to art topics, and that the holiday season never fails to introduce many foreign works of great merit and of comparatively small cost, it will be seen that an expensive American art magazine must have very extraordinary attractions to hold its own against such serious competition. The failure of our contemporary probably is due less to a lack of popular appreciation of good art work than to the fact that the field for art periodicals is already well filled. It is true that the foreign art journals do not give as much attention to American art matters as some of us may think they deserve; but, considering that the average American patron of art does not show any respect even for American painters until their talents have received the "cachet" of foreign approval, it is not surprising that he should be content to buy his etchings where he buys his pictures.

## RECENT PICTURE IMPORTATIONS.

THE enterprise just opened at the British capital, "Le Salon à Londres," is anticipated and made useless here by private enterprise. There is no need to inaugurate at New York an exhibition of the representative works of the Paris Salon, when the choicest specimens are snapped up by our importers and shown in their collections.

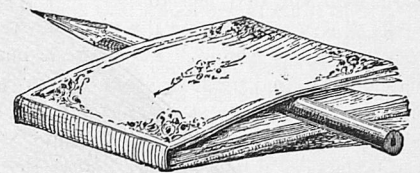
Mr. Schaus, for instance, exhibits "Un Coup de Main," by E. Renouf, representing a fisherman's little daughter putting her strength to his oar in the boat. The modelling of the two forms, in a total lack of direct sunlight, is sharp and shadowless, recalling the style of Renouf's master, Jules Lefebvre, though the prosaic aspect of the personages is very different from that of Lefebvre's classical idealities. The picture is some ten feet across, and has all the reality of an actual living group. Mr. Schaus succeeded in

wresting this important canvas from the French government, after the Minister of the Fine Arts had written to the artist his acceptance of the work. The American dealer, glad to have such an emphatic indorsement of his own approval, bore off the canvas in triumph to America, where the appreciation of an enlightened public will amply repay the artist for the loss of governmental honors. Mr. Schaus has likewise secured the wonderful "Source" of J. J. Henner, the phenomenal Alsatian painter. This is a figure, nearly life size, of a sitting nymph arranging her auburn tresses at a spring in the forest. His astonishing treatment of cream-white flesh in the cave-like light of a woodland clearing, is shown in this example with all his Rembrandt-like power. Both these specimens are from the Paris Salon of 1881.

The last Salon picture of Villa—a pupil of Gleyre—is seen at Mr. Avery's gallery. It is mediævalism revealed in all its poetry and grace. Two female figures, arrayed in the richest embroideries of the old Flemish weavers, sit in a luxurious chamber, the youngest playing on a portable organ fit for the fingering of a Saint Cecilia. This treasure is actually preserved in the Louvre, and a loan of it was obtained by M. Villa for his picture. It is in ivory, and is held in the lap, while a gold chain passes round the neck of the player to keep the cumbrous instrument in place, and the bellows are managed by the left hand of the executant. The fair girl who evokes from the keyboard some sacred melody of Stradella's, is robed in a tissue of gold and silver cloth, exquisitely painted by the artist, while a somewhat maturer beauty, in the jewelled wimple of Dürer's day, sits beside and conducts the lesson. Mr. Avery also possesses just now an exquisite head by Henner, called "Asleep," with an ivory profile, distinct and suave as a cameo, in its frame of dark red hair. He has also a recent Schreyer, an "Arab Advance Guard," possessing all that master's silky sheen of color in its white-cloaked Bedouins and gray-coated desert steeds. A specimen of Van Marcke, executed ten years ago, "The Milking," shows cattle, peasants, and a Troyon-like landscape, gravely and richly painted, with a sincerity which the artist has latterly exchanged for more taking contrasts and more violent effects. Grison, of Strasburg, seems half a German or Düsseldorf painter in his "Wedding Breakfast," a scene of provincial life, with a dandy bridegroom complacently exhibiting to the guests the masterpieces of a country tailor. A fine landscape, with a bathing nymph, shows the candid realism of Courbet. A group of boats at Etretat is by the sincere and capable illustrator of that favorite watering-place, the late C. Hoguet, whose death now adds a value to his legacy of sunny Etretat scenes. By Alfred Stevens is a lady at a portière, "Listening." The painting of her black silk and squirrel-skin cloak, of her fair face seen behind a dotted black veil, has the readiness and assurance of execution only found in a master. Adrien Moreau is exemplified in a picturesque châtelaine, "On the Terrace," issuing from a Gothic portal, with red damask costume and book of hours.

By the last-named painter, A. Moreau, is seen at Goupil's his picture of 1881, "The Bohemians," which takes us again into the full lustre of the Salon just closed, by placing us in front of one of the most conspicuous paintings of that exhibition. It is a desolate, open twilight landscape, in the style of Jules Breton, about eight by five feet in measure. The silver sickle of the moon twinkles in the sky just over the head of the principal figure, a graceful Esmeralda dancing with her tambourine for the amusement of her comrades. There are six figures, with the inevitable donkey. The old gipsy king, in a royal squalor of rags and dirt, crouches in a gully opposite the performer, and the black-haired sorceresses of the tribe lie prone around, supreme in idleness and freedom. The figures harmonize with the landscape, forming with it an exquisite unity. At Goupil's may also be examined Jules Breton's important picture from the late Salon, called the "Femme de l'Artois." It is a life-size study of a farm-woman, complete to the knees, and embodies an effort at expression very rare for Breton. The rustic wife holding her milk jar with both hands on her knees, looks up to the horizon with a wistful and inquiring expression, as if eager to find an escape from her life of narrow opportunities and sordid toil. By Bonnat is found, also at Goupil's, his latest picture, the "Petite Italienne Souriante." It is nearly life-size,—a model from the Spanish

Stairs at Rome, biting her finger in the studio and smiling at her painter with a general intention of cajolery and coquetry—and is painted with that almost exaggerated profundity of shadow which makes Bonnat's later figures so inexorably real. By Fromentin is seen a delicious "Arab Watering-place" of 1873, with a bank covered with Oriental figures under a cliff, and the snowy peaks of the Atlas contradicting the general effect of sultriness and aridity; the crowded figures bathe their beautiful barbs in the ford, or lie at ease on the welcome sward. Boldini, in a dazzling little canvas of 1876, shows "The Studio," an eighteenth century beauty being painted by La Tour in one of the oval frames of the day, and stretching her modish figure with irrepressible ennui between her gallant and the fashionable painter. "The Dispute," by Grison of Bordeaux, is a lively scene of the last century, showing servant-girls disputing over spilt water-jars at a street fountain in Lille, watched by an amused Hogarthian crowd. Detti shows "The Arrival," a young married couple dismounting in an Italian courtyard in the middle ages, and received by a pair of quaint and ceremonious hosts; and Béraud, a scene on the modern boulevard, between Cristofle's and Everard's shops, with all the humors of the Paris crowd.



## My Note Book.



SOME unpardonable blunders are pointed out in a recent notice in The Critic of the pamphlet "Head-Dresses Exhibited on Ancient Coins." For instance, many specimens quoted by the author in illustration are declared to be either forgeries or misread coins. This the reviewer attributes to the fact that nearly all the books of reference on ancient coins in public libraries in this country are old ones, "written before numismatic science had established itself upon a sound basis." American writers on coins, indeed, seem invariably to have reproduced the blunders of their predecessors. Mr. W. C. Prime flounders dreadfully. I do not know that the many misleading statements in his book on coins have ever been publicly challenged. When it appeared, that honest and able review, The Critic, had not yet seen the light. But what, I wonder, would its well-informed writer have said, had the book come under his searching eye, of Mr. Prime's colossal blunder of giving an engraving of a relatively modern Italian medal, and calling it a Jewish shekel of the time of Simon Maccabæus?

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THE sale of the personal effects of Lord Beaconsfield, at which the original manuscripts of some of his published works brought very high prices, suggests a future source of profit to authors hitherto unthought of, to say nothing of a new pursuit for collectors. Over twelve hundred dollars was paid for the manuscript of "The Young Duke," about a thousand for "Contarini Fleming," and over seven hundred for "The Wondrous Tale of Alroy." The first-named sum was only a trifle less than the highest realized for any one picture in the late earl's collection, a coast scene by Copley Fielding. Probably, however, the authenticity of the pictures was not in all cases above suspicion. Certainly, for a genuine Watteau, a hundred dollars—which was somewhat more than a "Fête Champêtre" attributed to that master brought—would have been a great bargain; and a "Virgin and Child, with Elizabeth and John"—an alleged Rubens—cannot be called dear at a hundred and thirty dollars.

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It would be interesting to know what would have been paid for the copyright of the three works named, the manuscripts of which brought nearly two thousand dollars. The copyright and stereotype plates of the "Biography of Lord George Bentinck" were offered for sale; but as only about a hundred dollars was bid,